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THAT PARLOR MAID

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS

BY

HELEN C. CLIFFORD

Fitzgerald Publishing Corporation  
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# SOME NEW PLAYS

★**MOLLY BAWN.** 35 cents. A comedy drama in 4 acts, by MARIE DORAN. 7 male, 4 female characters (or by doubling, 5 male and 3 female). Time, about 2 hours. Based upon incidents from a story by "The Duchess." The story is woven about Eleanor Masserene (*Molly Bawn*), whose mother eloped with a young Irishman, which has so embittered her grandfather that he disinherited her. After many years of loneliness he sends for *Molly*. How the coquettish heiress wins the hard, old man, is worked out in the play sometimes in a comedy setting and again in strong dramatic tenseness. \$10.00 royalty per performance by amateurs.

★**UNACQUAINTED WITH WORK; or, Married in Thirty Days.** 25 cents. A comedy in 5 acts, by O. E. YOUNG. 6 male, 6 female characters. 1 interior scene. Time, 2 hours. *Charles Chester*, a young man of leisure, succeeds in running up several bills. At last his landlord, *Jacob Sharp*, threatens to imprison him unless his board bill is paid. His aunt's promise to help him out for the last time if he marries within thirty days forces him to propose to every girl he meets, which naturally gets him into more trouble. Through his effort to get out of the tangle many funny situations arise. Among the characters are a very funny chambermaid and her sweetheart, a darkey cook, a comical bellhop, a clever detective, etc.

★**WAIT AND SEE.** 25 cents. A comedy-drama in 3 acts, by HELEN C. CLIFFORD. 7 males, 7 females. 1 easy interior. Time, 1½ hours. At a week end party one of the guests endeavors to purloin an important document, compelling a girl over whom he believes he has control to assist him. While they are trying to open the safe they are discovered by the butler who proves to be an old trusted retainer of the girl's father. Although the man tries to fasten the guilt upon the butler and the girl, he is unsuccessful and a happy climax is reached. Among others it has an excellent soubrette role.

★**WIVES ON A STRIKE.** 25 cents. A comedy in 3 acts, by LILLIAN SUTTON PELÉE. 6 male, 7 or more female characters. Time, 3 hours. 3 interior scenes. Costumes varied. At a meeting of the Wives Welfare Club, it is decided to "go on Strike" and *Jane Spink* is to make the test case. The wives' grievances greatly amuse *Betty*, a bride of 30 days, who boasts of her husband's angelic qualities. Her first offence of having supper late causes such a row that *Betty* also decides to "go on strike." *Betty's* scheme to make her husband change his set ideas about woman's rights is the cause of all the mix-up. How the strike is won and the husbands taken back is cleverly depicted in the play. A parrot who swears at the right moment adds to the funny situations.

★**HIS SISTERS.** 25 cents. A farce in 1 act; by BEULAH KING. 1 male, and 8 female characters; or 9 female characters as the male may easily be impersonated by a female character. 1 interior. Time, 30 minutes. Three sisters, who adore their handsome older brother, secretly plot to have him marry their particular friends. How their plans are all upset and matters finally smoothed out is cleverly told in this play.

★**SUITED AT LAST.** 25 cents. A sketch in 1 act, by ELIZABETH URQUHART. 7 females and a discharged soldier. 1 interior. Time, about 40 minutes. *Dorothy*, a newly-wed wife, is in search of a cook; her mother, her chum, her Aunt Jane give much advice as to how she shall interview the various applicants, in fact, so much so, that *Dorothy* is utterly confused and finally engages just what her husband has advised from the beginning.

★**ENCORES AND EXTRAS.** 35 cents. A collection of short monologues suitable particularly for encores, but are available for any occasion to fill in for a few minutes; contains black-face, Hebrew, a fond mother, a rube monologue, etc.

★**GORGEOUS CECILE.** The. 25 cents. A comedy in 3 acts, by BEULAH KING. 4 male, 5 female characters. 1 interior. Time, 2 hours. Max, the son of a wealthy widower, notwithstanding the schemes of his father and aunts, has remained obdurate to all of their matrimonial plans. Upon his return home for a visit, he finds, as usual, a girl whom it is hoped will subjugate him, but the hopes are frustrated, as it is "The Gorgeous Cecile" to whom he turns. The parts are all good and well contrasted, with sparkling dialogue and plenty of action.

★**MADAME G. WHILIKENS' BEAUTY PARLOR.** 25 cents. An original entertainment in 2 acts, by VIOLA GARDNER BROWN, for 12 (or less) female characters. 1 interior scene. Time if played straight about 50 minutes. A very comical travesty on a beauty parlor during a busy day. Introducing among others, French, Irish, colored, rube character, two salesladies, all strongly contrasted.

# THAT PARLOR MAID

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS

By

HELEN C. CLIFFORD

*Author of "Wait and See," "Alice's Blighted  
Profession," "Whose Widow," etc.*

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## That Parlor Maid

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### CHARACTERS

MRS. HAMILTON.....	<i>The hostess</i>
BOB HAMILTON.....	<i>Her son</i>
ESTELLE HAMILTON.....	<i>Her daughter</i>
UNCLE JOHN.....	<i>Her brother-in-law</i>
ARCHIE.....	<i>Estelle's fiancé</i>
DRUSILLA HOPKINS.....	<i>A young poetess</i>
JIM CLARK.....	<i>In love with Estelle</i>
MRS. JONES.....	<i>A guest</i>
CECIL JONES.....	<i>Her husband</i>
ANNA.....	<i>The parlor maid</i>
ROSIE.....	<i>The cook</i>
FIDO.....	<i>Uncle John's dog</i>

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TIME:—The present. LOCALITY:—Summer cottage in the Adirondacks.

TIME OF PLAYING:—About an hour and a half; by Anna introducing songs and dances it can be lengthened as desired.



## COSTUMES AND CHARACTERISTICS

**MRS. HAMILTON.** A middle-aged society woman, proud of family and detests anything vulgar. At first entrance she is dressed in street attire. During the remainder of the play she wears neat, modern dresses.

**BOB.** A young man of about 30, tall, handsome, and very democratic.

**ESTELLE.** A beautiful young girl of 22, inclined to be snobbish. Wears pretty dresses. On last entrance she wears a stylish traveling suit.

**UNCLE JOHN.** A jolly bachelor of about 35. His dog, Fido, is always at his heels.

**ARCHIE.** A rather insipid youth of about 25. Wears yellow spats and also carries a monocle.

**DRUSILLA HOPKINS.** A typical old maid type, about 35, very solemn expression. She is old fashioned in looks and dress. At first entrance she wears a hat and wrap, second entrance a very unbecoming dress. In ACT III she wears outdoor clothes and carries a valise. On last entrance in ACT III she wears a stylish dress and looks very chic.

**JIM CLARK.** Young man of about 28, handsome in a coarse way—has an air of a man-about-town.

**MRS. JONES.** A middle-aged woman who loves scandal.

**MR. CECIL JONES.** A middle-aged henpecked husband.

**ANNA.** A handsome, jolly, all-round attractive girl of about 28. At first entrance she is poorly, though neatly clad in street attire, veil drawn over her face, carries a large valise. After Mrs. Hamilton engages her she wears the regular maids' costume. Her valise should contain several cheap, but flashy gowns, supposed to be dance hall dresses; these dresses she does not wear.

**ROSIE.** A rather stout cook. Wears a large kitchen apron, flour daubed on hands and face.

There are no extraordinary costumes necessary for the male characters; any neat suits will do.

## INCIDENTAL PROPERTIES

Cigarettes for BOB.

Book for ESTELLE.

The dog, Fido, for UNCLE JOHN.

A large hand-bag or valise containing several cheap but flashy gowns, tea wagon on which there are cups, etc., and feather duster for ANNA.

Vanity bag containing powder puff, and telegram for MRS. HAMILTON.

Valise for DRUSILLA.

Monocle for ARCHIE.

Mournful record and jazz records for the Victrola.

## STAGE DIRECTIONS

As seen by a performer on the stage facing the audience, R. means right hand; L., left hand; C., center of stage; D. C., door in center of rear wall; D. R., door at right; D. L., door at left of stage. UP means toward back of stage; DOWN, toward footlights.



# That Parlor Maid

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## ACT I

SCENE.—*Living-room of MRS. HAMILTON'S summer cottage in the Adirondacks. Late afternoon. The furnishings and furniture must be suitable for a summer cottage. Rustic table DOWN C. with chairs R. and L. Other rustic chairs placed about as desired. Doors at R. and L. Another door in C. of rear wall opening in from the hallway. If desired an open fireplace at L. There is a settle near fireplace L. A couch is at R., bookcase near couch. Victrola and record cabinet DOWN R. A jazz record is hidden behind bookcase. Portrait of a man of colonial days hangs over D. R. On the table are papers, books, letters, magazines, etc. Vases of flowers on bookcase, table, etc. DISCOVERED ESTELLE on settle L., book in hand and BOB sitting R., smoking.*

ESTELLE. I think it shocking the manner in which you treated Belle last night.

BOB (*surprised*). Shocking? Ye gods and little fishes! And they call this a free country! I was obliged to grin and make myself agreeable to a most uninteresting bud, when all around me there were so many beauties in whose sunshine I longed to bask.

ESTELLE (*horrified*). Bob!! How can you refer to Belle in that way? Why, her family is one —

BOB (*holds up hand*). Stop! If you utter that phrase again I think I will—eh—eh—eh—OH! I don't know what I shall do, but I tell you this much I am gosh darn sick of hearing that said in this family. Why, ever

since my dancing school days mother has said (*Imitates mother*) "Remember, Bob, make yourself agreeable; her family is one of the oldest and richest in the country." (*Throws self on couch, lights cigarette*)

ESTELLE. You certainly are in a most disagreeable mood to-day.

BOB (*walks up and down stage*). Perhaps I am. But I tell you, sis, being in the army and rubbing elbows with so many different fellows has taught me that in the middle and poorer classes there are as many fine people as there are in our set.

ESTELLE. That was one of the things I detested about the war; all classes were thrown together. I could never understand why each class was not kept in its proper sphere.

BOB (*laughs*). Estelle, you are one of the biggest little snobs in five states.

ESTELLE (*indignant*). Bob!

BOB. Don't stare at me so, you are, and so was I before the war. It is not our fault—it is simply what we were taught from infancy. Estelle, do you know, I am beginning to think that shop girls and day laborers get more out of life than either you or I.

ESTELLE. How absurd! I am rather satisfied with my life.

BOB. But are you? Now own up, wouldn't you like it if Archie was to make love to you differently, say—a little cave man stuff would put some spice into it.

ESTELLE (*haughtily*). Bob, I would appreciate it if you would not discuss my affairs.

BOB (*shrugs shoulders*). I will jolly well suit myself when it comes to marrying.

ESTELLE. You are a *Hamilton*, therefore you will *not*. For generations *Hamiltons* have been marrying into the best of families, regardless of —

ENTER MRS. HAMILTON D. C. *Briskly goes to table, looks through letters, paper, etc.*

MRS. HAMILTON (*sits near table*). We had the most

interesting meeting to-day. We read quite a few of Drusilla Hopkins' poems. I certainly hope she will accept my invitation to visit us.

BOB. And if you can depend on Uncle John's description, I, for one, will be delighted with her presence. She must be some looker.

MRS. HAMILTON. Bob! I wish you would choose your words more carefully, and why do you always look for beauty of face instead of first finding out the social standing——

ESTELLE. And who ever heard of a clever woman being pretty. Uncle John was up to one of his pranks when he told you she was beautiful.

BOB (*disgusted*). Oh, you women make me sick; there you go and spoil everything. (*ESTELLE shrugs shoulders, picks up book idly, turns pages. BOB dreamily smokes cigarette. MRS. HAMILTON reads letter*)

MRS. HAMILTON (*excited*). Listen, children, Drusilla has accepted and will arrive on the 5:30! (*Deep voice singing and whistling heard off stage*)

ENTER UNCLE JOHN D. C. *Dog at heels. Stops short when he sees occupants of room.*

UNCLE JOHN. Oh, hello, everyone! Well, Meg, what's the good news? Is she coming?

MRS. HAMILTON (*talks quickly*). John, I wish you would not call me Meg—and will you ever be serious! You seem never to remember that you are a Hamilton—look at your appearance—and who are you referring to as she?

UNCLE JOHN (*falls in chair overcome*). Whew! That was a long one. (*Raises hand, mock oath*) I promise on this, the seventh day of July, to become as solemn as death itself. (*To dog*) Lie down, Fido, have you no manners at all? I am surprised at you, you a Hamilton, the idea! (*To MRS. HAMILTON*) To correct my appearance—(*Straightens tie, rubs spot on coat*) And she is Drusilla Hopkins.

BOB (*quickly*). Oh Uncle John, she is coming—and isn't she pretty?

UNCLE JOHN (*to dog*). Do you hear that, he wants to know if she is pretty. (*To BOB*) Why, Bob, with her golden hair and sparkling eyes, pretty is a mighty poor word with which to describe her. I should ——

BOB (*to ESTELLE*). There! Was I not right?

ESTELLE (*rises—yawns*). Well, I should worry what her looks are. (*Goes to D. R.*)

BOB (*mock anxiety. To UNCLE*). She doesn't flirt, does she?

UNCLE JOHN. Flirt? Why, men old and young, cripples and strong ones, become her slaves at first sight.

BOB (*innocently*). Poor Archie!

ESTELLE (*from D. R.*). Archie can have his freedom at any time. (*EXITS D. R. UNCLE and BOB exchange amused looks. MRS. HAMILTON reads letter, frowns*)

MRS. HAMILTON (*lowering letter*). Now here is a pretty state of affairs! Mary writes her mother is no better and that she will be unable to resume her duties for a week or so. She is sending her friend Anna to fill her place. Oh dear!

UNCLE JOHN. Well, why worry? So long as you will have some one to ——

MRS. HAMILTON (*ignoring UNCLE'S remarks*). I suppose this friend of hers is an awkward blundering sort, and I did want to make it so pleasant for Drusilla.

UNCLE JOHN. By the way, Meg, did Miss Hopkins mention when she was coming?

MRS. HAMILTON. Oh, my dear, did I not tell you? To-day on the 5:30, and as you are the only one acquainted with her I think you had better meet her.

UNCLE JOHN (*looks at watch*). I'm willing. Better go and fuss up a bit. (*To dog*) Come, Fido.

[*EXIT D. R., whistling*]

BOB. Guess I will take a stroll around the grounds before dinner. (*Goes to D. L.*)

MRS. HAMILTON (*turns quickly*). Bob, just a slight hint. Remember, Drusilla Hopkins comes from one of

the oldest families in the south—I would like you to make yourself *very* agreeable.

BOB. Don't worry, mother, I have the most implicit faith in Uncle's choosing. I imagine it will not be hard for me to make myself agreeable. [EXITS D. L.]

MRS. HAMILTON (*returns to sorting of letters. Sniffs air*). Good gracious! What is that burning? If Rosie is ——— [EXITS *quickly* D. R.]

ENTER BOB D. L., *followed by* ANNA.

BOB (*looks around room*). Mother was here a minute ago. You are the new maid?

ANNA. Yes, sir.

BOB. Well, just be seated a few moments. (ANNA *sits demurely on edge of chair*) I will send mother to you. (EXIT BOB D. R. ANNA *removes veil, skips lightly around room, examines doors, windows, etc., stands in listening attitude, quickly resumes seat*)

ENTER MRS. HAMILTON D. R. ANNA *rises*.

MRS. HAMILTON (*briskly*). You are Mary's friend, I believe?

ANNA. Yes, ma'am.

MRS. HAMILTON (*eyes ANNA*). Have you had any experience as a parlor maid?

ANNA (*quickly*). Oh, yes, ma'am. Out West in back of Shuttle's Café they had a parlor and because I was always wanted in there they called me the parlor maid.

MRS. HAMILTON (*gasps*). Shuttle's Café! Heavens!

ANNA. No, ma'am. Shuttle's Café, Havens, Colorado.

MRS. HAMILTON (*ignoring the correction*). And what were your duties there?

ANNA (*puzzled*). Duties?

MRS. HAMILTON (*impatient*). Yes, duties. What did you do in this—eh—eh—café?

ANNA (*relieved*). Oh, I mostly danced like this. (*Dances a few steps*)



MRS. HAMILTON (*waves hand*). All right, that will do,  
I —

ANNA. Then sometimes I sang. (*Sings in a high cracked voice "The End of a Perfect Day," or any other song desired.* MRS. HAMILTON *goes around room wildly, hands over ears, shakes ANNA.* ANNA *stops suddenly on high note*)

MRS. HAMILTON (*almost shrieks*). That will do for the present. Tell me, is your friend Mary sick, or is it her mother?

ANNA (*surprised*). Why, Mary is all right; it is her mother who is sick.

MRS. HAMILTON. Oh, I just thought she must be. You have brought your uniform?

ANNA (*claps hands delightedly*). Oh, which one do you want me to wear? The one with the brass buttons? (MRS. HAMILTON *falls in chair, fans herself*) Most of the boys out there (*Points over shoulder with thumb*) loved me in it—but then I have others just as pretty. (*Empties contents of bag on floor; out tumble cheap, but flashy gowns.* MRS. HAMILTON *is too surprised to speak.* ANNA *holds up cheap dance hall dress*) See, isn't it pretty? I love this, don't you?

MRS. HAMILTON (*turns head away in disgust*). Take it away—take it away. (ANNA *rummages through pile on floor, holds up another dress for inspection*) Put them all back. (*Goes to D. R., calls*) Rosie! Rosie! (ANNA *jams dresses in bag*)

ROSIE (*off stage*). Yes, ma'am, I'm coming.

ENTER ROSIE D. R., *flour daubed on face and hands.*

MRS. HAMILTON (*not turning*). Rosie, this is Mary's friend, Anna, the new parlor maid. Tell her what to wear and what her duties are.

ROSIE (*hands on hips, eyes ANNA up and down.* ANNA *mimics ROSIE.* All this behind MRS. HAMILTON'S back. To ANNA). Come, follow me. (ANNA *picks up bag, follows ROSIE.* ESTELLE *appears at D. C., watches her mother unnoticed*) [EXIT ROSIE and ANNA D. R.]



MRS. HAMILTON (*walks up and down, wringing hands*).  
Oh dear, oh dear, whatever shall I do!

ENTER ESTELLE D. C.

ESTELLE. Mother! What is the trouble?

MRS. HAMILTON (*forced laugh*). Trouble? Oh, nothing, simply that Mary has sent her friend—a common dance hall girl—to take her place!

ESTELLE (*advances toward mother*). A dance hall girl? I thought we needed a parlor maid.

MRS. HAMILTON. So did I, but Mary thought differently.

ESTELLE (*horrified*). Is Mary crazy or what?

MRS. HAMILTON. That is what I was wondering. I guess she is *what*.

ESTELLE. Surely, mother, you are not going to allow her to remain?

MRS. HAMILTON. Can you suggest anything different? Of course, if we were in the city we could hire a maid quickly enough—but in this wilderness—impossible—and Drusilla Hopkins due any minute.

ESTELLE (*sighs*). I suppose she is better than nothing. We shall have to make the best of it. (*Picks up book, goes to settle, hidden from rest of the room*)

[EXIT MRS. HAMILTON D. L., *much provoked*

ENTER ANNA D. C., *followed by ARCHIE*. ESTELLE *makes a motion to rise, thinks better of it, sinks deeper in settle and watches unseen*.

ANNA (*eyes ARCHIE up and down and around*). Gee, you are some stunner! (*ESTELLE gasps*)

ARCHIE (*adjusts monocle, expands chest*). M-my word—eh—eh——

ANNA (*pushes ARCHIE into seat*). Sit down, old top.

ARCHIE (*grins*). You are—eh—jewel—by Jove.

ANNA. Oh, no, you get me wrong. I am the jew-

eller—I am after setting the jewel. (*This is lost on ARCHIE*) Now let me see, what shall I do to amuse you? (*Thinks*) You see, I am the parlor maid.

ARCHIE (*becomes suddenly stiff*). Parlor maid? eh—eh— (*Adjusts monocle*) will you —

ANNA. Yes, parlor maid. Isn't it funny, when I was out West behind Mulligan's bar —

ARCHIE (*rises quickly, looks around nervously*). Really, deucedly awk-ward, don't you know, but eh—eh — (*ESTELLE enjoys the situation—ducks every now and then*)

ANNA (*pushes ARCHIE back into chair*). Where are you bound for, old dear? As I was saying, while behind Mulligan's café, I used to entertain the customers (*ARCHIE very uncomfortable*) by telling them jokes—I might try some on you, old bean. Come here. (*Takes ARCHIE by hand*) Now listen. I will say to you I saw a golf ball rolling down the street the other day and what do you think it did? And you must say, "Well, what did it do?" Then I will answer you. Ready?

ARCHIE (*going toward D. C.*). Really I—I —

ANNA (*drags him back*). Come on, old yellow spats, let's have some fun. Ready? "I saw a golf ball roll down the street the other day, and what do you think it did?" (*ARCHIE looks at ANNA—blank expression*) Well, hurry up, say your line.

ARCHIE (*at sea*). My line, my line? My word! My word!

ANNA. No! no! say, "Well, what did it do?"

ARCHIE (*parrot-like*). No! no, say, "Well, what did it do?"

ANNA. It turned round! Ha, ha, ha! (*ARCHIE looks at ANNA bewildered*) Why don't you laugh?

ARCHIE. Laugh? Laugh? By Jove, what at?

ANNA. The ball turned round, ha, ha, ha! (*Shakes ARCHIE*) Grin, old solemn face. (*ARCHIE forces grin*) Heavenly Ned, take it off. (*Meaning grin*) Take it off. You are impossible. I'll try singing. (*Sings in high*

*pitched voice—in midst of song* ARCHIE *bursts out laughing.* ANNA *suddenly stops*) Now what?

ARCHIE. The ball turned round, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

ANNA. Well—I'll—be —— (*ESTELLE emerges from hiding place*)

ESTELLE (*stiffly*). I trust I am not intruding?  
(*ARCHIE and ANNA look at ESTELLE open-eyed*)

ARCHIE. By—Jove—eh—eh ——

ESTELLE (*waves him to silence. To ANNA*). I presume you are the new parlor maid?

ANNA. Yes, ma'am.

ESTELLE (*haughtily*). You may go. (*ANNA goes to D. R. Blows kiss to ARCHIE, who is much flustered*)

[EXIT ANNA D. R.]

ARCHIE (*staring at D. R.*). By Jove, by Jove ——

ESTELLE. Archie!

ARCHIE (*jumps*). Yes—m—my—dear.

ESTELLE. Kindly do not dear me after the abominable way you acted this afternoon.

ARCHIE. Acted? Why—what have I done?

ESTELLE. Your taste seems rather plebeian.

ARCHIE. Now, now, Estelle, that is all wrong ——

ESTELLE (*yawns*). Well, let's forget it.

ARCHIE. Estelle, you look ripping. All day I think of you ——

ESTELLE. Better tend to your work during the day and leave me for the evenings.

ARCHIE. Estelle—eh—eh—will (*Gulps*) you marry me?

ESTELLE (*stifles yawn*). Well, I suppose I have to marry some day, and as I said to mother yesterday, I do not expect to find a husband like you read about in books. All I want is one who is handsome, rich, does not spend all his time at the club and will gratify my every wish. I suppose you are as good as the next. (*Sighs*) We never do realize our dreams on this earth.

ARCHIE. And it was only to-day faw-ther said my head would be of great value to him in his business.

ESTELLE. I don't doubt it. Your father imports

solid ivory, does he not? (ARCHIE *does not get insinuation*)

ARCHIE (*passionately*). Your every wish I will make come true, by Jove.

ESTELLE. I dare say it will be nice to have my own home, and servants and automobiles.

ARCHIE. Estelle! You make me so happy, I warn you, I am going to kiss you.

ESTELLE (*mock surprise*). Really! (*Just as ARCHIE is about to kiss ESTELLE he bursts out laughing*) Well! What?

ARCHIE (*laughing*). The—the—ball turned round.

ESTELLE (*rises*). Come, this room is stifling. (ARCHIE *continues laughing*) [EXIT ARCHIE and ESTELLE D. C.]

ENTER ANNA D. R., *very evident she has been listening.*

ANNA. Whew! Some lovers! I'm sure glad the key-holes in this house are large—I won't miss much. (*Sings popular song—dances to it. BOB at D. C., much amused*)

BOB (*claps hands at end of song*). Bully for you, that was skrumptuous.

ANNA (*wheels round—sees BOB*). Oh! (*Goes to D. L.*)

BOB (*crosses to L., blocks passage*). Don't go yet. That song was great.

ANNA (*brightly*). You liked it? Thanks awfully. (*Demurely*) I know a lot more. Do you dance?

BOB. I should say I do.

ANNA. Well, let's go. (*Goes to Victrola R., hunts through records*) Ye gods and salt mackerel, is this all you have? Operas and funeral marches, no jazz?

BOB (*goes to doors, looks out, tiptoes over to hiding place in wall behind bookcase*). Here's a jazz—but it will be all up with me if mother hears it.

ANNA. Let's go. (BOB *puts on record, starts music. ANNA clears floor. Both dance. MRS. HAMILTON appears at D. C.; is horrified*)

ENTER MRS. HAMILTON D. C., *stops Victrola.* ANNA and BOB *stop dancing.*

MRS. HAMILTON. What — does — this mean! (To ANNA) You may go. [EXIT ANNA D. R. *hurriedly*

BOB (*surprised*). But mother, what is the matter?

MRS. HAMILTON (*furious*). Matter? You, a Hamilton, have the nerve to question me after acting this way? Dancing with an ordinary parlor maid, a cheap café performer!

BOB (*puzzled*). A cheap café performer? A parlor maid? Why, I thought she was Drusilla Hopkins.

MRS. HAMILTON. Drusilla Hopkins? To think you could mistake that cheap looking girl —

ENTER ESTELLE D. L. *quickly.*

ESTELLE. Heavens, mother, what is the row about now? I could hear you out in the garden.

MRS. HAMILTON (*excited*). Imagine! I came in here and found Bob dancing with *that* parlor maid!

ESTELLE. Oh!

BOB (*impatient*). Well, how in thunder was I to know it was the parlor maid?

ESTELLE. Mother! I think you ought to get rid of this maid. She seems to upset everyone—even Archie is acting queer.

BOB (*incredulous*). Archie acting queer? Never, sister—he is only being natural.

ESTELLE (*gives BOB withering look*). Mother, what are you going to do about it?

MRS. HAMILTON. What is there to be done? This is a fine state of affairs—here Drusilla is on her way, and how would it look to her if we had no parlor maid. (BOB *shrugs shoulders and saunters toward D. R.*)

[EXIT BOB D. R.]

ESTELLE (*listening attitude*). There is a machine stopping. It must be she now. (MRS. HAMILTON *pats hair, powders nose.* ESTELLE *indifferent*)



ENTER UNCLE JOHN and DRUSILLA D. C. DRUSILLA *very old-fashioned in looks and dress*. ESTELLE and MRS. HAMILTON *exchange amused looks*.

MRS. HAMILTON (*advancing*). So this is little Drusilla?

DRUSILLA (*murmurs*). Mrs. Hamilton? And this? (*Meaning ESTELLE*)

MRS. HAMILTON (*beams*). This is my little Estelle. I do hope you two will like one another. (*All sit*)

DRUSILLA. Yes, that reminds me of one of my poems, where I quote:

“Ye meet a friend both snobbish and proud.  
Our lamentation, I assure you, is quite loud.  
But before we part, who will know  
We will be friends, instead of foes.”

(ESTELLE *puzzled*. UNCLE JOHN *grins*)

MRS. HAMILTON (*gushingly*). Oh, how charming! I have read most of your poems.

DRUSILLA. Then you like them? Everyone does.

UNCLE JOHN (*innocently*). Oh, and Drusilla can tell all about death and the great hereafter.

MRS. HAMILTON. How interesting. (*Rising*) But come, dear, you will like to freshen up a bit before dinner.

DRUSILLA (*holds up hand*). Just a minute, Mrs. Hamilton, I've got an idea! (*Scribbles*) You see, that is the way my inspirations come—like a flash. When I started to write some of my masterpieces I did not know what they were going to be——

UNCLE JOHN (*innocently*). And after they were written how could you tell what they were? (MRS. HAMILTON *gives UNCLE furious look*. ESTELLE *conceals smile*)

DRUSILLA (*superior air*). I am always inspired.

UNCLE JOHN. Oh!

MRS. HAMILTON (*to DRUSILLA*). Come along, dear.

[EXIT DRUSILLA and MRS. HAMILTON D. R., *talking*

ESTELLE (*laughs*). How could you, Uncle John? Wait until Bob sees her. *Such an egotist*.



UNCLE JOHN. This certainly is one on Bob.

ENTER BOB *quickly at D. L.*

BOB. Hello, Uncle, has she come?

UNCLE JOHN. I should say she has, and some looker. I'll leave it to Estelle. What say you, Estelle?

ESTELLE. I quite agree with you, Uncle. Bob dear, try and make yourself agreeable—because I would *love* to have her as a sister-in-law.

BOB. Leave it to me, old girl. (*Looks through books on table*) Where in sam hill is her book of poems? I suppose I ought to be familiar with at least a few of them. (UNCLE and ESTELLE *exchange amused looks*. BOB *reads book*. Steps heard outside. BOB *expectant air*. UNCLE *winks at ESTELLE*)

ENTER MRS. HAMILTON D. R., *followed by DRUSILLA, who is dressed most unbecomingly*. BOB *stares at DRUSILLA, disappointed*.

MRS. HAMILTON (*to BOB*). So you are here. This, Drusilla, is my naughty boy, Bob.

BOB (*poor attempt at smiling*). Eh—eh—how do you do?

DRUSILLA (*gushingly*). So this is Bob. Oh, I am so glad to meet you. Your dear uncle has told me how much you enjoy my poems. I have a whole new stack of them—I am going to read them to you first. (ESTELLE *giggles*. UNCLE *very serious*)

MRS. HAMILTON (*hurriedly*). My! that will be splendid. Bob will enjoy them so much; won't you, dear?

BOB (*gulps*). Ye-yes—sure!

MRS. HAMILTON. And won't you tell us, dear, something about your life. It is not very often that we are favored with such a celebrity.

DRUSILLA. No, I suppose not. My life has always been different from other people's—from a mere babe I felt that I was sent to this earth on a special mission, as in one of my poems:—

“To you of the common clay I say  
It is not, I wager, that every day  
You meet a genius such as I,  
One who comes direct from God’s own sky.”

ENTER ANNA D. R. *with tea wagon, drops cup.* UNCLE  
and BOB *jump to pick up broken pieces, bump heads.*

MRS. HAMILTON (*indignant*). Bob! John! Anna, you may go. (*Aside*) That maid! (*ANNA goes to D. R., turns, winks and EXITS D. R.* BOB and UNCLE JOHN *stare at D. R., backs to others.* MRS. HAMILTON *making the most of situation*) Those two boys (*Meaning BOB and UNCLE*) are so proud of their family that they steal every glance at one of our most honored ancestors. (*BOB and UNCLE JOHN look up at picture over D. R., smile and return to seats*)

DRUSILLA. Yes, my thoughts are always on the dead. I ramble for hours through our halls at home, dreaming of the ones gone before us, as in one of my poems:—

“Oh, death! where is thy sting, when I leave behind,  
Honor and fame to my ——”

ESTELLE (*rising*). Eh, I beg your pardon—I just thought of a letter I have to write. [EXITS D. R.]

UNCLE JOHN. And I have to feed Fido. [EXITS D. L.]

BOB (*at D. C.*). And I ——

MRS. HAMILTON (*sweetly*). Bob dear, Drusilla has some wonderful poems she wants to read to you, while I go see about dinner.

BOB. But, mother, I ——

MRS. HAMILTON (*at D. R.*). That’s all right, dear, I’ll attend to it. [EXITS D. R.]

DRUSILLA (*dreamily*). Oh blissful moment, when I can be alone with my beloved ——

BOB (*uncomfortable*). I—eh—eh—beg your pardon.

DRUSILLA (*startled*). Oh, was I thinking out loud?

BOB (*desperate*). Beautiful day—would you like to take a tramp through the woods?

DRUSILLA (*perplexed*). A tramp through the woods?

BOB. Yes, I should think it would be rather refresh-

ing for a girl of your wonderful intellect to take a tramp through the woods.

DRUSILLA. But do you think a tramp would like to take a walk through the woods with a girl of my wonderful intellect?

BOB (*quickly looks at DRUSILLA, uncertain whether she is joking or not*). Yes—yes—Oh—how do you like music?

DRUSILLA. I love it when it is sad and slow. (BOB *puts on a mournful record*. DRUSILLA *talks louder than music*) That reminds me of my poem:—

“The mother and her son had parted,  
The grave its ——”

BOB (*shuts off music*). Too bad that is cracked. (*Puts on another record*)

DRUSILLA (*dreamily*). That reminds me of my —— (BOB *quickly takes off record, puts on jazz record*. DRUSILLA *tries to talk—music too loud*. ANNA *appears at D. R.* BOB *rushes over to her, whirls her around stage*. DRUSILLA *claps hands, enjoys it*. MRS. HAMILTON *appears at D. C., horrified*. DRUSILLA *rushes up to her, pulls her around stage*)

## CURTAIN

## ACT II

SCENE.—*The same as ACT I. One week later. DISCOVERED ESTELLE and JIM on couch engaged in earnest conversation.*

ESTELLE (*stiffly*). Really, Mr. Clark ——

JIM. Aw, forget the Clark stuff and call me Jim. Do you know, Estelle, the first day I laid eyes on you I said to myself, “Here is the girl for me.” You look like peaches and cream to me. Of all the girls I’ve ever met, I crown you queen.

ESTELLE. No, I think I had better not go. Archie may object.

JIM. Well, at least come out and see the car, it is some beauty.

ESTELLE. I don't mind doing that.

[EXIT JIM and ESTELLE D. C., talking]

ENTER UNCLE JOHN D. R., *throws himself on couch, dozes.* ENTER ANNA D. L., *sees UNCLE, tiptoes up to him, tickles his nose with feather-duster.* BOB appears at D. C. and watches. UNCLE jumps up. ANNA claps hands, runs around table, UNCLE after her, both laughing. ENTER BOB D. C.

BOB. Well! I'll—be ——

UNCLE JOHN (*stops short*). Oh, hello there, Bob, come on in. Your mother is out so we are exercising a bit. (ANNA goes to D. R.)

BOB (*crosses to R.*). But where are you going? Won't you cheer up a fellow a bit?

UNCLE JOHN. Poor Bob, I suppose you do need cheering up.

BOB. I should say I do, after having that human crape draped around me all day.

ANNA (*laughs*). Let me see, what shall I do? Of course, I being the parlor maid, and this being the parlor, I suppose it is all right for me being in here, but somehow your mother seems to object to my being sociable.

BOB. Oh, forget what mother thinks. Come, start something.

UNCLE JOHN. That's right—"Eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die," is my motto.

ANNA (*sits on table*). Well, what shall it be, a song?

BOB. Full of pep.

UNCLE JOHN. That's the stuff. (ANNA is about to sing)

ENTER DRUSILLA D. C.

DRUSILLA (*very solemn*). In the midst of life there is death.

BOB (*falls in chair*). Ye gods!

UNCLE JOHN. Hello there, Drusilla. Bob was just telling us about the wonderful new poems you have written.

DRUSILLA (*sits near BOB, giggles. BOB gives UNCLE withering look*). Perhaps you too would like to hear them.

UNCLE JOHN. Delighted!

BOB (*starts victrola*). Come, let's dance.

DRUSILLA (*stops music*). Robert, I think too much of you to let you idle away your time in such a frivolous manner. You are destined for greater things.

UNCLE JOHN. I quite agree with you.

DRUSILLA. And if you will let me be your guiding star —

UNCLE JOHN. Deeming myself responsible for your welfare, Robert, I think you ought to let Drusilla lead you on, and on, and on. (*BOB is desperate. ANNA enjoying it*)

DRUSILLA. Dancing is such a waste of time, as in one of my poems:—"Dance on, Dance on —"

BOB (*quickly*). Anna, won't you tell us some stories about the West? I am sure Drusilla will enjoy them.

ANNA (*sweetly*). No, I would rather hear Miss Hopkins recite, I *enjoy* her so.

UNCLE JOHN. Yes, Drusilla, read us one of your saddest. (*BOB is furious*)

DRUSILLA (*stands in c. of stage, very dramatic. Recites*).

A maid and her lover were parting by the shore,  
She whispered, "I shall never see you more,  
For over the ocean you are about to roam,  
And who can tell if you ever will come home."

The lad in a husky voice replied,  
"Although I may travel the world wide,  
I'll give you my word, I'll be at your side  
When up to the altar rail we will glide."

She waved farewell to her love, for she knew it to be  
The last on this earth he, she would ever see—

(ANNA *fake sob*. UNCLE *mock grief*. BOB *rolls eyes*)

So back in her cabin, alone, she grieved —

ROSIE (*off stage, calling*). Anna! Anna!

ANNA (*running to D. R.*). Coming, Rosie.

[EXITS D. R.]

UNCLE JOHN. Drusilla, that was one of the best poems I have ever heard. I regret I cannot stay to hear it finished. (*Goes to D. L.*)

BOB (*rising*). Hold on there a minute, Uncle, I'll be with you.

UNCLE JOHN (*sweetly*). Oh, do not bother, Bob, you stay right here with Drusilla. [EXITS D. L.]

DRUSILLA. It is lamentable that they had to go just now, because the best of my poem is yet to come. Where was I? Oh, yes—The lover —

BOB. Say, wouldn't you like to work up an appetite for dinner?

DRUSILLA. Oh, but I wanted to recite to you.

BOB. Come along, we will *finish* it outside. (DRUSILLA *takes BOB'S arm*. *Looks lovingly up into his face*)

[EXIT BOB and DRUSILLA D. L.]

ENTER ANNA D. R., *singing, 'dusts, arranges chairs, etc.*

ARCHIE (*at D. C. nervous*). Oh—I—eh—eh —

ANNA (*dances up to him*). Come in, old dear; it is ages since I last saw your solemn face.

ARCHIE. I beg your pardon—you know—will you—have you —

ANNA. Archie dear, I have another good story to tell. Now listen. A lady went into a department store one day and asked for silk. When it was placed in front of her, she exclaimed, "Oh, really, I must be mad, I want mus-lin." On hearing this, a little boy, standing near by, rushed out of the store, ran up to an officer, shrieking, "There is a lady in that shop who has gone mad, she wants muzzling (muslin)." (ARCHIE *stares at ANNA, does not get joke*. ANNA *rolls eyes*) Impossible! Say, old Solomon Grundy, do you know that Jim is making love to Estelle?



ARCHIE. By Jove, is he?

ANNA. By Jove, he is. What are you going to do about it?

ARCHIE. Why, why, what can I do?

ANNA. Answer me this. Are you in love with Estelle?

ARCHIE. In love with—eh—Estelle, did you say?

ANNA. You heard me right, old top.

ARCHIE. Well—eh—ch—I am—ch—beastly fond of her, don't you know.

ANNA. No, I don't know. That is why I am asking you, are you in love with her?

ARCHIE. Love, love? I guess I am!

ANNA. For the love of Pete, wake up! There you let a fine girl like Estelle be vamped away from you by a —

ARCHIE. Vamped? I do not quite understand, by Jove.

ANNA. Yes, *vamped*; this Jim is going to steal Estelle away from you, if you don't wake up.

ARCHIE. Steal her? By Jove, eh—eh—I shall have to put in a burglar alarm.

ANNA (*eyes ARCHIE up and down*). Say, how would you like to be a cave man?

ARCHIE. A—a—what?

ANNA. A cave man. (*ESTELLE appears at D. C., unnoticed by ARCHIE and ANNA*)

ARCHIE. Beastly dirty, don't you know. I could never live in a hole.

ANNA. This is what I mean. Go up to this Jim, shake your fist in his face, the first time he opens his mouth bang him in the eye (*Demonstrates*), then grab a hold of Estelle like this (*Arm around his waist*) and dash —

ENTER ESTELLE D. C.

ESTELLE. Ahem! I beg your pardon for intruding— (*ANNA quick EXIT D. R.*) I am sorry to have spoiled your little —

ARCHIE (*bewildered*). B-but—my dear, I—you—we—eh——

ESTELLE (*haughtily*). Of course, it is all right; we understand one another perfectly, but kindly choose some one else besides *that* parlor maid to make love to.

ARCHIE. Really, Estelle, you—are—eh—eh, all——

ESTELLE. Understand, please, I am not at all jealous—but you see, a servant is not just——

ENTER MRS. HAMILTON, MR. and MRS. JONES D. C.

MRS. HAMILTON. Estelle dear, I was just telling Mrs. Jones about your engagement to Archie.

MRS. JONES. Such a happy union, yours is going to be, isn't it, Cecil?

MR. JONES. Yes, my dear.

ESTELLE. Archie and I were just making a few plans for the future. (*All sit*)

MRS. HAMILTON. I hear that Helen Peters is going to be married. Who is the lucky man?

MR. JONES. Her father. (*All laugh*)

MRS. JONES. Cecil *will* have his little jokes. Of course I would be the last person in the world to talk about anyone, but do you know, I heard that Mr. Smith was seen in a café the other night with a blonde woman!

MRS. HAMILTON. Shocking!

ESTELLE. The idea!

ARCHIE. Beastly rotten!

MRS. JONES. You understand I am not saying anything against them, but that same night, Mrs. Smith and that man——

ENTER ROSIE, *rushing in D. R., hands and face smeared with flour.*

ROSIE (*talks quickly*). Mrs. Hamilton, I give notice right now—I will not cook and slave and have *that* common parlor maid come behind my back and steal the pie that I had cooked for dinner. I have put up with her

long enough, I go right away. (MRS. JONES *haughtily eyes ROSIE up and down*)

MRS. HAMILTON (*forced sweetness*). There, there, Rosie, go back to the kitchen; everything will be all right.

ROSIE. All right, is it? and she making love to —

MRS. HAMILTON. There, there, Rosie. (*Trying to push ROSIE toward D. R.*)

ROSIE (*angrily*). And she a cheap cabaret singer. I will go to —

MRS. HAMILTON (*forced laugh*). Yes, yes, Rosie, very funny, very funny.

ROSIE. Funny, is it? Did you think it very funny when she —

MRS. HAMILTON. There, there, Rosie. (*Finally gets her to D. R., pushing her out*) [EXIT ROSIE D. R.]

MRS. HAMILTON (*forced smile*). Rosie is so funny, she gets *such* ideas into her head. Oh! Mrs. Jones, did I tell you Drusilla Hopkins is visiting us?

MRS. JONES. Oh, how wonderful it must be to have a genius living with you, must it not, Cecil?

MR. JONES. No—eh—I mean yes, my dear.

MRS. JONES. You see, Cecil and I get along so well together for the simple reason I ask his opinion on everything.

ARCHIE. Very good idea.

MRS. JONES. Is she anything like her poems? Of course I would be the last person to say anything, but they say poets are a little queer.

MRS. HAMILTON. Oh, my dear, Drusilla is just a sweet, unassuming young girl—well-mannered and —

ENTER DRUSILLA D. R., *eating pie—all stare.*

MRS. HAMILTON (*forced smile*). This is dear little Drusilla.

DRUSILLA (*finishes pie*). Yes, I am Drusilla Hopkins, the poet. (*To MRS. and MR. JONES*) You have read some of my wonderful poems?

MRS. JONES (*beaming*). Yes indeed we have. Didn't we enjoy them, Cecil?

MR. JONES. No—eh—I mean, yes, my dear.

DRUSILLA (*bored air*). I knew you *must* have enjoyed them—everyone does.

MRS. HAMILTON. Now, Drusilla, won't you recite some of your poems for us?

MRS. JONES. Yes, do!

DRUSILLA. I shall recite "The Encareotta Sublimity of the Dead."

MRS. HAMILTON. Charming!

MRS. JONES. Delightful.

DRUSILLA (*very dramatic*).

"I was prowling one day in the graveyard,  
My thoughts were busily on the dead,  
When like a roll of thunder ——"

ARCHIE (*bursts out laughing*. MR. JONES, *who has been sleeping, jumps up*. All stare at ARCHIE). Ha, ha, ha! She wants mus-lin, Ha, ha, ha!

MRS. HAMILTON. W-why—Archie!!!

MRS. JONES (*horrified*). Does he take fits?

ARCHIE (*still laughing*). She, she—wants—mus-lin (muzzling). Ha! Ha! HA!!

ESTELLE. Archie!! What is the matter with you! What are you laughing at?

ARCHIE. W-why—nothing—it's just a joke—you see, a woman ——

ESTELLE (*rising*). Come, Archie, let's talk a walk to cool off.

MRS. HAMILTON. Very good idea! (MR. JONES *resumes his slumber*)

[EXIT ESTELLE and ARCHIE D. C. ARCHIE *still laughing*

DRUSILLA (*sobs*). To think I should put myself out to come here, to be insulted.

MRS. HAMILTON. No, no, dear; Archie did not refer to you. It was just a joke he had heard. (To DRUSILLA) Come, dear; dry your pretty eyes and continue your recitation.

DRUSILLA. "I was prowling one day in ——" (*Loud*

noise heard outside. *Fido* rushes into room from D. R. upsetting chairs and table. ANNA after him, laughing. Much confusion as dog and ANNA EXIT D. L. MR. JONES lets out loud snore. All gasp)

MRS. JONES (*shakes* MR. JONES). Cecil! Cecil!!

MR. JONES (*jumps up*). No—eh—Yes, my dear.

MRS. JONES (*angrily*). There are times when you need a self starter to wake you up.

MR. JONES (*aside*). Not when I have a crank like you to get me going.

MRS. JONES (*sharply*). What—what did you say?

MR. JONES (*meekly*). Nothing, nothing, my dear.

DRUSILLA (*very solemn*). In the midst of life there is death.

ANNA (*at D. C. R.*). Dinner is served.

MRS. HAMILTON (*puts arm around* DRUSILLA). Come, dear, I want you to meet some more of your admirers. (All EXIT D. C. MRS. HAMILTON and DRUSILLA lead. MR. and MRS. JONES follow, MRS. JONES talking angrily, MR. JONES very repentant)

ENTER D. R. UNCLE JOHN, *on tiptoes*. Crosses to D. L. Calls "*Fido*."

UNCLE JOHN (*to Fido*). Well, old top, at last they have gone in to dinner. They are good for at least an hour in there. (*Makes self comfortable on couch, smokes pipe*)

ENTER ANNA D. L., *dancing in*.

ANNA (*to* UNCLE). Hello there, why aren't you in there? (*Meaning dining-room*)

UNCLE JOHN. Much more comfortable here. (*Laughter heard outside*)

ANNA. Listen!! They seem to be having a good time.

UNCLE JOHN. Do you know I sometimes think life would be quite bearable were it not for its pleasures. I

bet there is more than one person in there wishes Drusilla Hopkins—well—eh—I am too much of a gentleman to say where.

ANNA. She is funny, isn't she? To-night I thought Mrs. Hamilton would have a complete collapse. Drusilla was in the midst of one of her most gruesome speeches when Fido rushed into the room and I after him. Oh! when I think of the expression on Mrs. Hamilton's face. (UNCLE joins in hearty laughter)

ENTER BOB D. C. *disgusted. Brightens when he sees ANNA, crosses over to couch, sits between UNCLE and ANNA.*

BOB. Thank goodness, I got out of there alive, whew!

UNCLE JOHN (*crosses over, sits on other side of ANNA*). How did you make your get-away?

BOB. Oh, I arranged that all right. Of all the pests Drusilla Hopkins is the worst.

ANNA. The *idea*, talking about that dear sweet girl in that manner, and your mother so anxious to make a match between you.

BOB. If Drusilla Hopkins was the last woman on earth I would not marry her.

UNCLE JOHN. Why don't you give her a chance? Perhaps you do not know the real Drusilla; maybe under the veneer of all this sob stuff she is quite human.

BOB. Well then, I would rather you make the discovery. I am through with her.

ANNA (*aside; winks at UNCLE*). Come, come, Bobbie, perhaps if you knew the real Drusilla you would fall madly in love with her.

BOB (*laughs*). Madly in love with Drusilla Hopkins. Ha, ha, ha! Say, this is rich.

UNCLE JOHN. I think Drusilla Hopkins is one of the sweetest, jolliest little girls in the world!

BOB. Uncle! I am greatly disappointed in you. I always gave you credit for knowing how to pick the ladies; now my choice would be —— (*Looks at ANNA*)



ENTER ARCHIE D. C., *utterly exhausted; limply falls in chair.*

ARCHIE. Of all the beastly pests this—eh—eh—Drusilla Hopkins is the limit, don't you know.

BOB. Why, Archie, I am surprised at you. I thought you liked a good story.

ARCHIE (*surprised*). Good story? But, old top, her stories are all of the lower region, you know, old bean, life is too jolly to think too seriously of the —

ENTER MR. JONES D. C., *very much upset; drops in chair.*

MR. JONES. As a rule I can stand most any woman talking, as I usually fall asleep, but oh!!—that Hopkins' person—whew!! (*All join in laughter*)

BOB. Come, Anna, let's put some life into this spirit meeting; we have been with the dead long enough.

ANNA. Do you think it safe? They may hear us.

BOB (*crosses to D. C. and looks out*). No need to worry. Drusilla is still amusing them. They pretend they are so interested in her talk, they wouldn't dare hear us.

ANNA. Then let's go. (*ANNA puts on a lively record. BOB and ANNA dance. UNCLE JOHN sings and stamps his feet to the music. ARCHIE and MR. JONES are engaged in undertone conversation. Every now and then MR. JONES bursts out laughing at something ARCHIE is telling him*)

ENTER MRS. HAMILTON D. C., *gasping, followed by MRS. JONES who falls in chair, overcome, at seeing her husband. ESTELLE is very indignant.*

MRS. HAMILTON. Well! What does this mean? (*BOB quickly turns off record. UNCLE grins. EXIT ANNA at D. R., very quickly*)

MRS. JONES. Well, I'll—be —

ENTER DRUSILLA D. C., *very soulful expression.*

DRUSILLA (*very dramatic*).

“And into the house of mirth  
Death creeps in unseen by all  
And there spread all over the earth  
Thirst, hunger, disaster, to make men fall.

“Hear ye not the trumpet of death  
All ye that make merry to-day,  
The angel of death hovers ——”

ARCHIE (*he and MR. JONES still ignorant of new arrivals in room*). Come, come, quick, there's a girl gone mad, she wants muslin mus-lin. (*He and MR. JONES laugh loudly. UNCLE JOHN and BOB turn back to audience, shoulders shake with laughter. DRUSILLA looks from one to the other, uncertain what it all means*)

MRS. HAMILTON (*overcome*). Well—I—I—be ——

MRS. JONES. Cecil!!!

ESTELLE. Archie!!! (*ARCHIE and MR. JONES turn quickly, stare with eyes and mouths open*)

## CURTAIN

## ACT III

SCENE.—*Same as ACTS I and II. Next morning.*

DISCOVERED MRS. HAMILTON *sitting near table, UNCLE JOHN reclining on couch smoking, and BOB resting elbow on bookcase.*

MRS. HAMILTON. To say the least, I think it was an outrage the way you acted last night.

UNCLE JOHN. But Meg, it was ——

MRS. HAMILTON (*stamps foot*). Don't you dare talk to me. I should think a man of *your age* would set an example instead of being a party to such behavior.

UNCLE JOHN (*shrugs shoulders*). I fail to see where the disgraceful behavior came in.

MRS. HAMILTON (*furious*). Hear the man talk, *you*, a Hamilton, associating with *that* parlor maid. I can expect most anything from you, but to inveigle Bob into such —

UNCLE JOHN. Really, Margaret, aren't you going a bit too far? I should judge Bob old enough to —

BOB. Yes, just because a girl is pretty and jolly, all you women condemn her. Why, Anna is as sweet as —

MRS. HAMILTON. Enough, young man! This sweet young person goes to-day. How you could enjoy *that* girl's company when such a brilliant young girl as Drusilla Hop —

BOB. Oh! Forget Drusilla Hopkins!!

MRS. HAMILTON. Bob!! I am surprised at you!

[EXITS D. C., *furious*

BOB. See, it is just as I told you. Anna must go, and this Drusilla—(*Makes wry face*) You introduced her here, Uncle. I should think you would do something to console me for playing such a mean trick.

UNCLE JOHN (*sighs*). I suppose I ought to pay the penalty, but what can I do? (*Thinks*) Ha, ha, I have it! Why don't you marry Anna?

BOB. Uncle, are you ever afraid of being inflicted with brain fever? You do think of such brilliant ideas. Say, don't you think I've thought of that myself? Why, ever since I laid eyes on Anna—well—it was a case of love at first sight, Uncle. Have you ever seen such wonderful eyes, such beautiful hair? And when she smiles—aw—hang it—I love her.

UNCLE JOHN. I repeat, why don't you marry her?

BOB. Can you not see the house of Hamilton tumbling down around my ears if I should marry a servant? But of course, that does not bother me in the least. I love her, and she loves me.

UNCLE JOHN. Great Scott! Well, what's holding you back?

BOB. She refuses to marry me on the grounds that

my folks are too rich, and they would object to her. (UNCLE JOHN goes to all DOORS, makes sure no one is in sight. BOB looks at him in astonishment) Why, why, what is ——

UNCLE JOHN. Sh, sh, come here. (BOB crosses over to him) I have a great secret to impart to you. Every family has a skeleton and our family is no exception. Your great, great, great grandfather loved a fisherman's daughter—but she also refused to marry him on account of his riches, so one night he, and a party of young men dressed as bandits, entered the little fishing town—causing much havoc—and your great, great, great grandfather forced his way into his sweetheart's cabin, and carried his beloved to the preacher's where they were made man and wife.

BOB. Do you mean to tell me that great, great, great grandmother of whom mother is so proud, was only a fisherman's daughter?

UNCLE JOHN. Yes, she was quite a beauty, and before a year had passed she became a general favorite. Of course I would not say that you could force Anna to marry you.

BOB. By Jove, I think I will try it. If one of my ancestors did it, why can't I?

UNCLE JOHN. This ancestor of yours was big and strong.

BOB. Well—I—like—your—nerve. I'll show you.

UNCLE JOHN (at D. C., laughs). I wish you luck—you know "faint heart ne'er won fair lady." But believe me, there is many a man who wishes he had not been so courageous. [EXITS D. C.]

BOB. Uncle John is not such a bad sort after all. (About to EXIT D. L. when DRUSILLA ENTERS D. L. rushing in and almost upsets BOB, who groans)

DRUSILLA (giggling). Ah!! My most honored one, I would have a talk with you.

BOB. Sorry, but I have a very important engagement.

DRUSILLA (pulls BOB over to couch). Come, my be-

loved, sit beside me. (*Sighs*) Oh! If the Lord had made me a man ——

BOB. Don't give up hope; perhaps he did, but you haven't met him yet.

DRUSILLA (*giggles*). Oh, but *I have*. I am not an ordinary sort of a girl. I do not fall in love with every man I meet ——

BOB (*aside*). Good reason why—she never got the chance.

DRUSILLA. But you, you are different—I am convinced that you are the man for me ——

BOB (*uncomfortable*). I say—now ——

DRUSILLA. Bob, most men do not like the silly sort of a girl.

BOB. No, I don't—but then there are some men who might enjoy you.

DRUSILLA (*dreamily*). Yes, most men do like me—I hold sort of a fascination (BOB *quietly* EXITS D. R.) it is a curious fact (*Suddenly stops talking, looks around stage for BOB, discovers he has gone—goes to D. C.*) Well—if—that —— [EXITS D. C.]

ENTER ANNA D. R., *singing; dusts, arranges chairs, etc.*

ARCHIE ENTERS D. L. *Goes to table, picks up book, glances through it. He is the picture of gloom.*

ANNA (*to* ARCHIE). What under the sun is the matter with you? All day you have been moping around the house as though you might have lost your last friend.

ARCHIE (*sighs*). Worse than that, by Jove! Estelle refuses to see me; she insists that I left the dinner table last night in order to come in here to be with you.

ANNA. How ridiculous!

ARCHIE (*sighs*). So I've told her.

ANNA (*dryly*). Thanks.

ARCHIE. Do you know I feel so blooming blue to-day, I wish I had never been born.

ANNA (*yawning*). Why, Archie, how queer! I was just thinking the same thing.

ARCHIE. Really, I will go quite mad, don't you know, if Estelle throws me over.

ANNA. Why don't you assert your manhood, that is if you have any, why that Jim person is ——

ARCHIE. Anna, did you ever wish you were a man?

ANNA. No, did you?

ARCHIE. Why—why—what do you mean—I am, don't you know.

ANNA (*innocently*). Oh, to look at you one would never think it. (*Angrily*) You deserve to have her taken from you. You remind me of a lady going from home one day, locked everything up well, and for the grocer's benefit wrote on a card "All out—don't leave anything." This she stuck on the front door. On her return home she found the house ransacked and on her door was pinned a note, "Thanks—I haven't left much."

ARCHIE. Decently nice of the chappie to leave the note, don't you know.

ANNA. Impossible! (*Meaning ARCHIE*)

ARCHIE. But, Estelle, my Estelle, that man will take her and what can I do?

ANNA. Do? Why, when you see them together go up to him, grab him by the ——

ARCHIE (*going to D. C.*). I am heart-broken, my Estelle. [EXITS D. C.]

ANNA (*falls in chair*). Whew! Well, I sincerely hope Jim does get her. That Archie is so ——

ENTER BOB D. L., *rushes over to ANNA.*

BOB. Thank God you are still here. I've been searching all over the house for you.

ANNA. Dear me, what for?

BOB. Mother says you are to go, therefore you *must* marry me.

ANNA. Bob dear, I am sorry to have to go through all this again—I cannot marry you—we belong to different classes.



BOB. What do I care for class distinction. (*Much excited*) I repeat, will you marry me quietly, or will I have to use force?

ANNA (*archly*). Oh, Bob!! You wouldn't steal me, would you?

BOB (*passionately*). Oh, wouldn't I? It is either yes or no. Come—Hurry—What is it?

ANNA (*pretending*). Oh, dear, you frighten me so.

BOB (*coming nearer*). Well, what is it?

ANNA. Bob, you act so queer, I am afraid. No—what would your mother—— (*BOB ties handkerchief loosely over ANNA'S mouth; it slips often. ANNA holds it over mouth, calls for help in a weak voice. BOB drags her gently to D. L. ANNA winks at audience. BOB very determined looking. EXIT ANNA and BOB D. L.*)

ENTER JIM D. C., *rushing in very much excited.*

JIM. Estelle!! (*Sees room empty*) Oh, hang it, I told her I would meet her here. I hope she isn't going to back out. (*ENTER ESTELLE D. C. very nervous. She is dressed in street attire. JIM rushes to her*) Estelle!! Girl, what a fright you gave me—I thought you were going to——

ESTELLE. Jim—I can't—I can't—— (*Covers face with hands*)

JIM (*tries to put arms around ESTELLE—she moves to one side*). After we have it all settled—now you are going to——

ESTELLE (*sobs*). Oh, please—I thought I could go through with it—b-but—I don't—love—you—I don't want to marry you.

JIM (*sneers*). You don't want to marry me because you don't love me! And still you were going to marry Archie.

ESTELLE. Oh please, please!

JIM. You can't make me believe you love that weak-kneed jelly-fish.

ESTELLE (*stamps foot*). How dare you! I will not listen to such talk.

JIM (*goes closer to ESTELLE, who moves away from him*). I tell you—you will marry me—you ——

ESTELLE (*shrieks*). I will not. (JIM *rushes up to her—is about to grab her when ARCHIE ENTERS D. C., takes in situation an instant, rushes over to JIM, grabs him by the collar, flings him aside. JIM furious, is about to come back at ARCHIE, but seeing his threatening attitude thinks better of it, makes quick EXIT D. C. ESTELLE looks with admiration at ARCHIE*)

ARCHIE (*suddenly bursts out laughing*). I didn't leave anything.

ESTELLE (*downcast eyes*). Archie!

ARCHIE (*dusting suit*). Beastly rotten chap, wasn't he? Are you all right, Estelle?

ESTELLE (*demurely*). Y-yes—thanks.

ARCHIE. Then I will go. (*Goes to D. R.*)

ESTELLE (*murmurs*). Archie. Do—Don't leave me.

ARCHIE (*surprised*). I—thought after the rotten thing I did last night, you ——

ESTELLE (*sobs*). Archie—wo-won't—you forgive me?

ARCHIE. Forgive you? Why—why (*All of a sudden it dawns on him*) you—you do not mean to say you—you love me?

ESTELLE. Y-yes.

ARCHIE (*at ESTELLE'S side in a bound*). By Jove, this is ripping! When did you first realize you first loved me?

ESTELLE (*sobs*). I—I—think—I must (*sob*) have always loved you.

ARCHIE (*gently*). There, there, dear.

ESTELLE (*mischievously*). But, I knew I loved you yesterday, when I argued with Marie White when she said you (*ARCHIE expectant*) didn't know enough to come in out of the rain.

ARCHIE. Estelle, you—you—will always be my protector?

ESTELLE (*murmurs*).. Yes, dear. (*Sighs*) I am so happy. (*Screams heard off stage. ESTELLE and ARCHIE much startled*)

ENTER MRS. HAMILTON D. C. *rushing madly in, waving telegram.*

ESTELLE. Mother! Mother! what is it?

MRS. HAMILTON (*screams*). Take it—read it. (*Waves telegram, walks up and down stage*) Oh, dear! Oh, dear!

ESTELLE (*holding out telegram*). Here, Archie, you read it.

ARCHIE (*opens telegram nervously*). By Jove! this is awful—listen, Estelle—“Will be on my way home with wife, Anna, when this reaches you. Bob.”

ESTELLE (*perplexed*). Anna, Anna who?

MRS. HAMILTON (*shrieks*). Anna—that parlor maid—Oh dear—Oh dear.

ESTELLE (*falls in chair, stunned*). Oh!

ARCHIE. By Jove! this is terrible—terrible!

ENTER DRUSILLA D. C., *dressed for journey, valise in hand.*

MRS. HAMILTON (*gasps*). But dear Drusilla, where are you going?

DRUSILLA (*very solemn*). I am going home where I will find solace in the ancient halls—confiding my heart-ache to the ghostlike presence of those gone before.

MRS. HAMILTON. But dear—

DRUSILLA. No persuasion on your part, Mrs. Hamilton, will be strong enough to hold me here. Bob led me to believe he cared for me. (*Very dramatic*) Ah! but I shall rise above this. Drusilla Hopkins was not made to pine over mere trifles—I have been sent to this earth on a special mission—I shall place my own feelings in the background and think of the great mass of people waiting for my poems. (*Picks up bag, very solemnly backs to D. C.*) Farewell, dear friends. Farewell! (ESTELLE and ARCHIE look at one another and burst into hearty laughter)

[EXIT DRUSILLA D. C.]

MRS. HAMILTON (*angrily*). I fail to see what there is

funny about this state of affairs. What will Drusilla think!

ENTER UNCLE JOHN D. R. *whistling*. *Stops short on seeing MRS. HAMILTON.*

UNCLE JOHN. How do, Meg. Nice day to-day.

MRS. HAMILTON (*in rage*). John Hamilton, how dare you speak to me! You let *that* parlor maid lure my poor boy into marrying her.

ESTELLE. Oh, this is terrible, Uncle. What will society think?

UNCLE (*innocently*). Poor Bob.

MRS. HAMILTON. And Drusilla has left feeling very much hurt. Oh, dear! Oh, dear!

UNCLE JOHN. I shall overtake Drusilla and bring her back. [EXITS D. L.]

ENTER BOB D. L., *very much excited*.

BOB. Mother, I have brought my wife home. Will you welcome her?

MRS. HAMILTON (*gasping for breath*). How dare you bring that girl into this house? Take her away—take her away—I—will—not—see—her.

BOB (*appeals to ESTELLE*). Will you welcome her as a sister?

ESTELLE (*head in air*). I have my social position to think of.

ARCHIE. Ah, come, Estelle, be a sport!! (ESTELLE gives him withering look)

BOB (*at D. L., angrily*). Very well, I will show you that I am capable of taking care of myself and my wife. (Snaps fingers) That for your social position. I will not come to you again. (Is about to EXIT D. L. when he is stopped by UNCLE JOHN)

ENTER UNCLE JOHN, D. L.

UNCLE JOHN (*grinning*). Well, folks, I was able to

persuade Drusilla to return. Shall I bring her in? (ESTELLE and ARCHIE roll eyes. BOB attempts to pass UNCLE JOHN but UNCLE blocks his passage)

MRS. HAMILTON (*forced smile*). Yes, do.

UNCLE JOHN (*opens D. L., calls*). Drusilla! (ENTER ANNA D. L., *she comes in demurely*. MRS. HAMILTON *horrified*. UNCLE JOHN *bowing low*) This (*Meaning ANNA*) is dear Drusilla come back to us once more!

MRS. HAMILTON (*angrily*). John, there is a time and place for all jokes. (*To ANNA*) I would appreciate it if —

BOB (*crosses over to ANNA*). Come, Anna, let's get out of here, since my folks —

ANNA (*holds up hand*). Just a minute, Bob. (*To MRS. HAMILTON*) I am Drusilla Hopkins. (*All stare at ANNA*)

MRS. HAMILTON (*gasps*). Why, what does this mean? If you are Drusilla Hopkins, who is the Drusilla we have been entertaining?

UNCLE JOHN (*grins*). An imposter.

ANNA. She is my cousin, Mildred Harris. (MRS. HAMILTON *looks from ANNA to UNCLE JOHN, then back again—suddenly she drops in chair laughing heartily. All exchange bewildered looks*)

ESTELLE (*crosses over to mother*). Mother dear, what is the matter?

MRS. HAMILTON (*tries to control laughter*). Well, if Mildred Harris is not an exact counterpart of her mother, I am *not* Mrs. Hamilton.

ESTELLE (*surprised*). Why, mother, do you know Mildred's mother?

MRS. HAMILTON (*laughs*). I should say I do. We were schoolgirls together, and many a lark she double-crossed me in, just as Mildred has. (*All look at MRS. HAMILTON inquiringly*)

ANNA (*surprised*). But, Mrs. Hamilton, *you* knew I was *not* Mary's friend!!

MRS. HAMILTON (*laughing*). Indeed I did *not*—I honestly thought you were Mary's friend, a parlor maid.



ANNA. Well, goodness knows I should have known better—Mildred is forever double-crossing people in this way. (ANNA and MRS. HAMILTON stare at one another. Both burst out laughing)

BOB (*impatiently*). I say, why all this mystery stuff? Let's in on it.

MRS. HAMILTON. Well, folks, that was once I put something over on you—I knew all along that Drusilla was an imposter. I planned the whole affair.

ESTELLE and BOB. Mother! you what!!

MRS. HAMILTON. At the literary club one day, we were wondering if people of to-day could be taken in as easily as in former years. After many arguments, it was finally agreed upon that the member having successfully hoodwinked the largest number of people in the funniest way with a most unexpected ending, would be the honored guest at a banquet to be held in the best hotel in New York. I think I have won the bet.

ESTELLE. But tell us, mother, how did you plan it?

MRS. HAMILTON (*smiles*). For years I have been corresponding with Mildred's mother. Naturally I wrote and told her of our arguments at the club, and of the bet that was on. Mildred also read the letter. In a very short time I received a note from Mildred telling me of her plan to help me win the bet. Knowing that we were all great admirers of Drusilla Hopkins' works, she proposed coming here impersonating Drusilla. (To ANNA) Now you go on with the story.

ANNA (*smiles*). Mildred and I are quite chummy down home, and when she told me of her intentions I helped her out all I could.

MRS. HAMILTON. What I want to know is, how did you happen to come here as Mary's friend?

ANNA (*puzzled*). Mildred led me to believe that that was all in the plan.

MRS. HAMILTON (*slowly*). No—I—never—mentioned Mary to her.

ARCHIE (*adjusting monocle*). Say, this is ripping.

ANNA. I naturally thought you did; she seemed to



know so much about Mary's absence on account of her mother's illness.

UNCLE JOHN (*steps forth, grinning*). Well, Meg, you thought you put one over on me. (*Laughs*) Mildred wrote to me and told me of the whole affair and I suggested to get the real Drusilla (Anna) to take Mary's place for a few days.

MRS. HAMILTON (*smiles*). But what about the letter I received from Mary telling me she was sending her friend?

UNCLE JOHN. I took care of that also. I obtained Mary's address from Rosie, then I wrote to Mary, enclosed \$25, told her she need not report back to work until sent for and to follow out my instruction—namely, to write and send that letter to you.

MRS. HAMILTON (*falls in chair overcome*). Well—I—never!!

BOB (*laughs*). Well, mother, the tables are turned.

ARCHIE. By Jove—this—is—jolly fine.

ESTELLE (*laughs*). In all my days I never heard of such double-crossing. (BOB *goes to D. C., is about to exit*)

ANNA (*goes up to BOB*). Dear, where are you going?

BOB. You do not want me! I suppose our marriage was in the plan also. (ANNA *looks at BOB reproachfully*)

UNCLE JOHN (*sharply*). Don't be a fool, Bob—your marriage was the only genuine thing in this whole affair.

BOB (*to ANNA*). Do—do—you really love me—Drusilla?

ANNA (*downcast eyes*). Yes—dear.

BOB. Now, mother, will you welcome—my—wife?

MRS. HAMILTON. Indeed I gladly shall. (*Goes up to ANNA, kisses her*)

BOB (*to ESTELLE*). And you, Sis?

ESTELLE (*kisses ANNA*). Forgive us, dear, for having been so snobbish.

MRS. HAMILTON (*laughing*). At last, John, I have found out from whom you have been receiving those

scented letters for the past six months. (*Shakes finger playfully at UNCLE JOHN. All laugh at UNCLE*)

UNCLE JOHN (*goes to d. c., flings it open. MILDRED (alias DRUSILLA) dressed very chic stands in doorway. UNCLE JOHN bowing low, introducing MILDRED*). My wife of six months. (*All stare at MILDRED and UNCLE JOHN unbelievably*)

ARCHIE (*in high voice*). By the way, Anna, now that you are Drusilla Hopkins will you go around all day reciting?

ANNA. Indeed not. (*Dances over to Victrola*) What will it be, folks? A jazz? (*Lively music played. BOB and ANNA dance. MRS. HAMILTON, ESTELLE and UNCLE JOHN gather around MILDRED, laughing and talking*)

ARCHIE (*bursts out laughing*). They—all—want—muslin! (*All look at ARCHIE and laugh*)

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